

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
STAFF REPORT

PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

DATE OF HEARING: NOVEMBER 19, 2008
CMPT 2008-0017, HS-3 HIGH SCHOOL AT FIELDS FARM
DECISION DEADLINE: DECEMBER 6, 2008
ELECTION DISTRICT: Blue Ridge PLANNER: Rodion Iwanczuk

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS), on behalf of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, has submitted a Commission Permit application for the construction of a High School (HS-3) on the Fields Farm property in the Purcellville Joint Land Management Area (JLMA). The Fields Farm property is approximately 230 acres and located on Route 711 (Alder School Road), north of Purcellville and the Route 7 Bypass, between Route 690 (Hillsboro Road) and Route 611 (Purcellville Road). The site is primarily zoned JLMA-3 (1993 Revised Zoning Ordinance) and M-1 (Limited Industrial-2+ acres within the Town of Purcellville) and a portion of the property falls within the Floodplain Overlay District (FOD). The high school will encompass 145.75 acres of the 230-acre property. The Mountain View Elementary School is located on the northwest portion of the Fields Farm Property. Recreational uses for the Upper Loudoun Youth Football League (ULYFL) have been approved for the southern portion of the property, south of the future collector road. Uses surrounding the property include farms, large residential lots, and subdivisions as well as some industrial uses to the south.

The proposed high school would contain up to 262,000 square feet with a design capacity for 1,600 students. Facilities associated with the high school include a football stadium, concession stands, ticket booths, storage buildings, a field house, baseball dugout, and various athletic fields. The proposed HS-3 is to be served by an individual, on-site water and wastewater system.

LCPS states the need for an additional high school in western Loudoun, and in particular in the Purcellville JLMA, as this is a central location along Route 7, a primary transportation corridor. To meet demand, the applicant states a desire to construct and open HS-3 as soon as possible.

A Commission Permit is a review of public uses to determine consistency with the Comprehensive Plan. In accordance with Section 6-1101 (A) of the 1993 Revised Zoning Ordinance, "no...public building or public structure....shall be constructed, established or authorized, unless and until the general location or approximate location, character and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted Comprehensive Plan."

**CMPT 2008-0017
HS-3 HIGH SCHOOL AT FIELDS FARM
Planning Commission Public Hearing
November 19, 2008**

A Special Exception for the proposed high school was approved on June 5, 2007. However, to reaffirm its consistency and conformity with the Plan as well as to respect the Supreme Court's ruling in the matter, this separate CMPT approval is being sought.

RECOMMENDATIONS

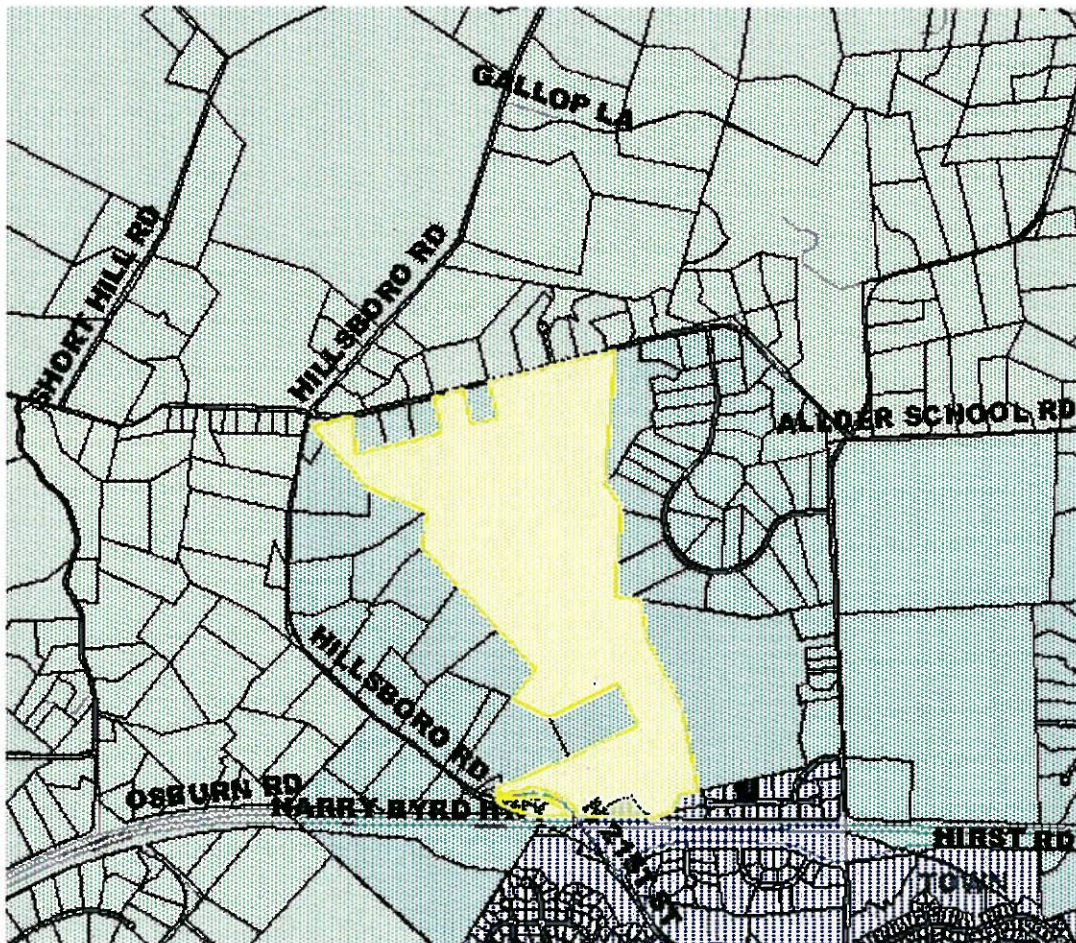
Staff recommends approval of the Commission Permit with findings as stated in the staff report.

SUGGESTED MOTIONS

1. I move that the Planning Commission approve CMPT 2008-0017, HS-3 High School at Fields Farm, as proposed with an individual on-site water and wastewater system, subject to the findings of the November 19, 2008 staff report, and forward the application to the Board of Supervisors for ratification.

Or

2. I move an alternate motion.



Map Width=12,575 feet

PIN	Address
522-29-5928-001 & 522-29-5928-002	36803, 36809, 36811, 36815, 36821, 36825, 36869, 36875 Alder School Road, and 17000 Hillsboro Road, Purcellville 20132

Directions: From Leesburg, take Route 7 (Harry Byrd Highway) west to the Route 287 exit in Purcellville. Turn left (south) on Route 287, proceed under the Route 7 overpass, and turn right on Hirst Drive. Proceed west on Hirst Drive until it ends at Route 690 (21st Street North/Hillsboro Road). Turn right (north) on Route 690, and proceed across the bridge over Route 7. Drive approximately 1 mile to the intersection with Route 711 (Alder School Road) and turn right. The driveway to enter the property is located at Mountain View Elementary School on the right (south) side of Alder School Road and is approximately 2,000 feet east of the Route 690/Route 711 intersection.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Applicant Information.....	5
II.	Referral Agency Comment Summary	6
III.	Findings.....	6
IV.	Project Review	
A.	Context.....	6
B.	Summary of Outstanding Issues	7
C.	Overall Analysis	7
V.	Attachments	9

I. APPLICATION INFORMATION

APPLICANT:

Loudoun County Public Schools
Sara Howard-O'Brien and Sam Adamo
Planning and Legislative Services
21000 Education Court
Ashburn, Virginia 20148
(571) 252-1156

REPRESENTATIVES:

Loudoun County Public Schools
Sara Howard-O'Brien and Sam Adamo
Planning and Legislative Services
21000 Education Court
Ashburn, Virginia 20148
(571) 252-1156

PROPOSAL:

A Commission Permit.

LOCATION:

36875 Alder School Road, Purcellville, Virginia, North of the Town of Purcellville, east of Route 690, and north of Route 7 Bypass

TAX MAP/PARCEL:

Tax Map #s /35111121-1/ and /35111121-2/ MCP1-522-29-5928-001 and 522-29-5928-002

ZONING:

JLMA-3

RESIDENTIAL UNITS:

N/A

NON-RES. FLOOR AREA: Up to 262,000 square feet

SURROUNDING LAND USES/ZONING:

NORTH	Residential/Vacant	AR-1
SOUTH	Industrial/Vacant	Town of Purcellville/M-1
EAST	Residential/Vacant	JLMA-3/PDH6
WEST	Residential	JLMA-3

ELECTION DISTRICT: Blue Ridge

II. SUMMARY

Referral Agency or Topic Area	Issues Examined and Status
Community Planning	Conformance with Revised General Plan, Revised Countywide Transportation Plan; Purcellville Urban Growth Area Management Plan; No outstanding issues.
Zoning Administration	No outstanding issues.
Town of Purcellville	Transportation and Utilities.

III. COMMISSION PERMIT FINDINGS

1. The need for and general location for a future high school in the Purcellville JLMA, north of the Town of Purcellville, was specified within the PUGAMP when it was adopted in 1995.
2. The applicant has confirmed the need for a high school in this location to provide educational services to the County's student population and to relieve overcrowding at other County high schools.
3. The proposed high school is sited in an appropriate location in terms of land use and is consistent with the PUGAMP policies of providing a full complement of public facilities and services to a growing population in the Purcellville area, including a high school north of the Town and Route 7 as shown on the Existing and Proposed School Locations Map in the PUGAMP. Furthermore, the Revised General Plan recognizes the Fields Farm property as planned for public uses; of which a school is such a public use.
4. The individual, on-site water and wastewater systems proposed for the high school are in conformance with Plan policy as contained within the PUGAMP.
5. The general location, character and extent of the proposed high school on the Fields Farm property, including its proposed water and wastewater systems, are substantially in accord with the policies of the Comprehensive Plan, including the PUGAMP and the Revised General Plan.

IV. PROJECT REVIEW

A. Context

Loudoun County Public Schools (LCPS), the applicant, on behalf of Loudoun County Board of Supervisors, the property owner, is requesting a Commission Permit for a High School (HS-3) on the Fields Farm property. This request is in accordance with Section 6-1101 (A) of the Loudoun County 1993 Revised Zoning Ordinance, "no...public building or public structure....shall be constructed, established or authorized, unless and until the general location or approximate location, character and extent thereof has been submitted to and approved by the Planning Commission as being substantially in accord with the adopted Comprehensive Plan."

The Fields Farm Property is approximately 230 acres and located on Route 711 (Alder School Road), north of Purcellville and the Route 7 Bypass, between Route 690 (Hillsboro Road) and

Route 611 (Purcellville Road). The site is primarily zoned JLMA-3 (Joint Land Management Area – 3) and M-1 (Limited Industrial-2+ acres within the Town of Purcellville). The high school will encompass 145.75 acres of the 230-acre property within the JLMA-3 District under the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance.

The Mountain View Elementary School is located on the northwest portion of the Fields Farm Property. Recreational uses for the Upper Loudoun Youth Football League (ULYFL) have been approved for the southern portion of the property, south of the future collector road. Uses surrounding the property include farms, large residential lots, subdivisions as well as some industrial uses to the south.

The proposed high school would contain up to 262,000 square feet with a design capacity for 1,600 students. Facilities associated with the high school include a football stadium, concession stands, ticket booths, storage buildings, a field house, baseball dugout, and various athletic fields. The proposed HS-3 is to be served by an individual, on-site water and wastewater system.

LCPS states the need for an additional high school in western Loudoun, and in particular in the Purcellville JLMA, as this is a central location along Route 7, a primary transportation corridor. To meet student population demands, the applicant states a desire to construct and open HS-3 as soon as possible.

B. Summary of Outstanding Issues

The Town of Purcellville is reviewing the application with comments to be available by the public hearing.

C. Overall Analysis

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Location

The subject property is located in the Purcellville JLMA and the applicable planning document is the Purcellville Urban Growth Management Plan (PUGAMP), jointly adopted by the Town and County in 1995 and amended in 1999. Policies from the 2001 Revised General Plan (RGP) and the Revised Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) also apply.

The PUGAMP policies speak to providing a full complement of public facilities and services to the Purcellville area. In particular, policies recognize the need for additional schools and state that the Town of Purcellville is the preferred location for new public facilities. However, if a suitable site is not available within the Town, Plan policies encourage their location within the Urban Growth Area (UGA)/JLMA. PUGAMP also identifies general locations within the JLMA where these facilities would be most appropriate (Existing and Proposed School Locations Map). On this map, a high school is depicted north of the Town and the Route 7 Bypass. However, since PUGAMP was adopted, residential subdivision activity has taken place in that specific area. Thus, while the need for a high school in the JLMA and north of the Town still exists, the initial preferred location for a high school shown on the map is no longer possible. The PUGAMP text also recognizes the need for future re-evaluation of school needs and preferred school sites.

PUGAMP policies also recommend that non-residential special exception uses within the UGA be evaluated to ensure that the proposed property has direct access to a collector or arterial street

without requiring travel through a residential neighborhood. The proposed high school will be accessed from Route 690 (Hillsboro Road), a major collector, via Route 711 (Alder School Road) and will not require travel through residential neighborhoods.

PUGAMP documents the historical role the Town of Purcellville has played as the cultural and commercial hub of the surrounding farm community. Because of its central location, Purcellville is the home to a variety of public facilities that serve the western Loudoun region, including schools. As stated by the applicant, the proposed HS-3 will be centrally located to serve the western Loudoun student population and will fulfill the anticipated public service need identified in PUGAMP.

In 2000, the Fields Farm Property was purchased by the County to accommodate future public facilities including schools and parks/recreation facilities. (Since that time, Mountain View Elementary school and the ULYFL recreational facilities have been approved on the property.) The RGP adopted in 2001, carried forward the County's intent for the property by depicting it as a public facility site on the Public Facilities Map.

Staff finds that the location, character and extent of the high school on the Fields Farm property is consistent and substantially in accord with PUGAMP and Revised General Plan policies. The need for a school within the Purcellville area was established when PUGAMP was adopted in 1995 as noted by inclusion on the Existing and Proposed Schools Locations Map. This need has also been reaffirmed by LCPS through the School and County Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and is planned to be financed through Virginia Public School Authority bonds. Further, the proposed location is consistent with Plan policies that encourage the concentration of public and facility service development in and around the Town and access to the school will not require travel through residential areas. Locating the high school on this property is consistent with the general character and extent of the Plan, the area and the uses that have been established with the existing elementary school and future recreational facilities on the Fields Farm property.

Sewer and Water Facilities

The proposed HS-3 is to be served by individual, on-site water and wastewater systems. PUGAMP policies state that "central (municipal or regional) sewer and water will be the preferred method of sewer and water service for all new residential and non-residential development in the Purcellville UGA. However, this policy is in no way intended to limit the development of uses on individual well and septic systems as permitted in the UGA under existing zoning". While central utilities would be preferred for the proposed HS-3, the systems proposed are individual (not communal) and dedicated to the High School use only. Furthermore, the Town has not agreed to allow the proposed high school to be served by central sewer and water from the Town.

Comprehensive Plan Summary: The general location and need for a future high school in the Purcellville JLMA was included within the PUGAMP when it was adopted in 1995. The proposed high school is sited in an appropriate location in terms of land use and is consistent with the PUGAMP policies of providing a full complement of public facilities and services to a growing population in the Purcellville area, including a high school north of the Town and Route 7 as noted on the Existing and Proposed School Locations Map in the PUGAMP. Further, the water and wastewater facilities proposed for the high school are in conformance with Plan policy.

ZONING

Staff have not identified any problematic zoning issues with the application. Staff notes that the Zoning Administrator had made a determination, dated June 22, 2006, that a commission permit was not necessary for the subject school as it was a feature shown on the Loudoun County Comprehensive Plan. In a September 12, 2008 decision, however, the Virginia Supreme Court determined that in fact a high school is "not a feature shown" on the Plan and that therefore a commission permit is required. The Board of Supervisors approved a Special Exception (SPEx 2006-0022) for the high school on June 5, 2007, and a site plan (STPL 2006-0081) was also conditionally approved based upon special exception approval.

Staff have reviewed the application in accordance with Section 6-1100 of the Revised 1993 Zoning Ordinance, noting that the high school feature must substantially conform to the comprehensive plan. The submitted Commission Permit Plat does conform with the approved special exception plat.

TOWN OF PURCELLVILLE

The Town of Purcellville is reviewing the commission permit application for the proposed high school on the Fields Farm property. Their review is focused upon conformance of the proposed high school with PUGAMP policies, including adequacy of the H-S 3 traffic study and proposed transportation improvements to support the proposed high school, and whether the proposed water and wastewater utility systems conform with PUGAMP policies concerning communal and alternative wastewater treatment systems. Detailed comments will be available prior to the Planning Commission public hearing.

V. ATTACHMENTS		PAGE NUMBER
1. Review Agency Comments		
a.Planning Department, Community Planning	(11/05/07)	A-1
b.Building & Development, Zoning Administration	(10/20/08)	A-7
c.Town of Purcellville	(11/7/08)	A-9
2. Disclosure of Real Parties in Interest	(11/6/08, 10/16/08, 9/17/08)	A-11
3. Applicant's Statement of Justification	(9/18/08)	A-19
4. Commission Permit Plat for HS-3 High School at Fields Farm (11/4/08 Revision, 9/15/08)		Follows A-28

This Page Intentionally Left Blank